

Volunteer Code of Conduct

What to do

1. Be natural.
2. Use Common Sense
3. Be mindful of the impression you can make – do not swear or smoke in their presence
4. Do listen to children - provide a welcoming comfortable space for them to talk.
5. Know what to do if a child discloses something to you that you are uncomfortable with (see below).
6. Touch is ok if in open, appropriate and instigated by the child.
7. Remember volunteers are not a Parent, Best Friend or Counsellor to a child.
8. You are a role model, a guide, a source of encouragement and support, a resource offering knowledge, but not advice.
9. Inform children of the boundaries of the relationship reminding them that the relationship concludes at the end of the activity.
10. Remember that participants might struggle with self-confidence, uncertainty, social anxiety – be positive in everything you do, do not criticise, ridicule, or make fun of a child.
11. Be aware of your actions – they may mirror you if you exhibit frustration, impatience or disinterest.
12. Be sensitive to spending a great deal of time with any one child.
13. Be sensitive to building trust with a child
14. Be on time, and be committed, show up for your dedicated slot each week so as not to disturb the club.

What not to do

15. Do not tell jokes of a sexual nature
16. Do not be alone with a child
17. Do not bring a child to the bathroom alone
18. Do not offer lifts or your mobile number to a child
19. Do not become Friends on Facebook with a child – maintain a boundary
20. Do not actively question a child about their lives, family or school
21. Avoid physical contact with a child
22. Never promise to keep a secret
23. Be sensitive to the risks involved in contact sports – for example: rough play, aggressive tackling, domineering attitude to play are all unacceptable.
24. Never verbally or physically abuse or punish a child.

Disclosure:

- If a volunteer notices something they must record it to a senior person, the homework club coordinator and record a written account in an incident book immediately
- If a participant says something to a volunteer the volunteer must record it to a senior person and record a written account in an incident book immediately
- The Senior person must inform the Child Protection officer at NUI Galway and agree on the procedure.
 - procedure for the child
 - procedure for the volunteer (in case of an allegation)
- Further information including how to report a disclosure can be found in the NUI Galway Child Protection Policy.

Action: